

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 04833 211426Z

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----065510 212136Z /75

R 211413Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9311
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 04833

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, SY
SUBJECT: EMBASSY BEIRUT CONTACTS WITH SYRIANS

REF: BEIRUT 4806

1. DURING CALL ON DIRECTOR OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS RIAD SIAGE ON AUGUST 21, I RAISED FOR HIS CONSIDERATION CHARGE KINSOLVING'S SUGGESTION THAT GOS DESIGNATE ONE OF ITS KEY OFFICIALS IN LEBANON TO ESTABLISH DIRECT CONTACT WITH AMBASSADOR PARKER AND EMBASSY OFFICIALS. I SAID THIS WAS MERELY INFORMAL PROPOSAL AND ONE WHICH WE THOUGHT MIGHT BE USEFUL IN ENABLING OUR TWO GOVERNMENTS TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AND COMPARE NOTES "ON THE GROUND" IN LEBANON. WHILE WE IN DAMASCUS ENJOYED GOOD CONTACTS, WE WERE NOT CLOSE TO THE SCENE OF FAST-BREAKING DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON.

2. SIAGE FIRST ASKED WHETHER WE HAD IN MIND A MILITARY OFFICER. I RESPONDED THAT THE SYRIAN CONTACT COULD BE EITHER MILITARY OR CIVILIAN, DEPENDING UPON SYRIAN PREFERENCE. SIAGE NOTED THAT SYRIAN FORCES IN LEBANON ARE UNDER THE ADF, IMPLYING THAT THE PROPER CONTACT

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MIGHT BE ADF COMMANDING OFFICER. I SAID THAT I FULLY APPRECIATED THIS BUT GIVEN COMMON SYRIAN-US OBJECTIVES IN LEBANON, A DIRECT SYRIAN-AMERICAN CONTACT SEPARATE FROM ADF CHANNELS MIGHT BE HELPFUL.

3. SIAGE SAID THAT HE WOULD TAKE THIS IDEA UNDER ADVISEMENT. SEELYE

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NNN

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